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ABSTRACT

In these times of tight budgets, libraries are seeking ways to cut costs, and one area being examined is book processing. This study assesses the impact on the organization of a library collection if the call number is not changed to fit into the shelf list sequence. The research questions examined are: "Is it necessary to adjust the book number to maintain alphabetic order of items within a class and, if not, how does this affect the call number display in an OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog)?" Data were collected from books cataloged at a large, academic, research library that uses the Library of Congress Classification scheme. Three basic steps were used to analyze the sample: (1) a description of the type of copy used in book processing; (2) call number analysis to assess how many call numbers were changed; and (3) of those changed call numbers, how many would have been one, two, or three or more screens away if not changed. Results indicate that for this library's collection, 0.16% of total titles cataloged without call number review may not be easily found in the OPAC. The study shows that approximately 78% of the copy cataloged items fit into this library's collection without needing any call number adjustment. It showed that 21.9% of processed items required a call number adjustment but that for 83.5% of these titles the call number adjustment was so slight that the unchanged call number was on the same screen or the next screen in the OPAC display. Twelve tables present data and results. (Contains 26 references.) (Author/AEF)

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ED 401 912

Call Number Adjustment: The Effects On Browsability If No Adjustment Is Made

A Master's Research Paper submitted to the
Kent State University School of Library Science
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Library Science

by

Ruey L. Rodman

July 1996

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Call Number Adjustment: The Effects On Browsability If No Adjustment Is Made

Abstract

In these times of tight budgets, libraries are seeking ways to cut costs, and one area being examined is book processing. This study attempts to assess the impact on the organization of a library collection if the call number is not changed to fit into the shelf list sequence. One call number function is to organize a collection which promotes browsability either on the shelf or in an online catalog. Not checking the call number might have an impact on this function. Data collected are from books cataloged at a large, academic, research library that uses the Library of Congress Classification scheme. From the unchanged, provided call number, browsability of the item will be tracked by assessing how many screens away it appears from like items in this library's Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC).

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INTRODUCTION

With the voluminous increase in the amount of available information, libraries are facing tough decisions on purchasing, book processing, and space requirements. Libraries today must look for ways to cut costs and increase efficiency. One area that is continuously under scrutiny is book processing. Available copy of cataloged records in bibliographic utilities such as the OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc. (OCLC) and the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) have done much to increase the speed of processing a book, but processing units still look for ways to increase efficiency and production.

One possibility that might increase book production is to accept the copy of the record provided by a bibliographic utility without reviewing the content of the record. Services like PromptCat, being developed by OCLC, or shelf ready materials provided by book vendors just might, at some point in the future, eliminate book processing at many libraries.

This study examines just one part of the provided record, the call number. Prior to book processing, data are collected on the provided unchanged call number. Data are also collected on the changed call number to compare with the unchanged call number and then an attempt to assess the impact on the browsability of an item or the effect on the display of the title in an Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) is made.

Classifying and cuttering or the assigning of call numbers is a primary activity in book processing. There are a number of

bibliographic classification schemes available for libraries to use today. In general, bibliographic classification is a system designed to organize materials in a chosen way. A call number is designed in parts using established symbols which include a class number (representing basic subject), one or two cutters (representing geographic, topical, or specific author), and book number (representing alphabetic scheme). Call number assignment is the most prominent method used in libraries to systematically organize collections according to the subject matter of each item. Public catalogs traditionally use a dictionary arrangement based on bibliographic information, e.g., the subject heading, the author, or the title of the items to collect them in an alphabetic arrangement. This type of arrangement promotes browsability within a file of items related to a specific subject, author, or title. The call number file is called the shelf list because it is arranged in the order the items are found on the shelf. This file promotes browsability among items that are grouped together by subject through call number assignment. Call number files or indexes are also made available for patron searching in many libraries.

Besides collecting like items together, another function of the call number has been to act as a shelf position locator or the means of ordering the items on the shelf. This role intensified with the rise or adoption of open access to materials by library patrons. As Osborn relates,

> The provision of self-service on the part of readers grew out of conditions that were encountered for the first time

> in history in the 1820's when in the British Museum some 200 readers a day presented requests for materials and subjects which were beyond the capacity of the librarian-as-a-living-catalogue to fill, for example a request to see all of the library's holdings of material printed in France during the French Revolution or a request for information on new discoveries around the world or new developments in all fields of science (Osborn 1991, 36).

For the purposes of this study, class number is defined as a system of alphas and numerics used to keep like items together by subject whether on the shelf, in a card catalog, or in an OPAC. Part of the class number may be a cutter for subject, topic, or specific author. If an adjustment is made to this cutter it is considered to be a class number change. Book number is defined as the alpha and numerics used to alphabetize by author or title within a class number. The above elements form the basic parts of the notation for a bibliographic classification scheme. Although the scheme is not under study, the one used by the library which is the data source for this investigation, is the Library of Congress Classification scheme. Shelf listing is defined as the process of adjusting the book number to fit an item into the proper order of an existing sequence of materials. Throughout this study these definitions are used very concretely to differentiate between subject organization (class number portion) and alphabetic shelf organization (book number portion). The phrases shelf listing and call number assignment both refer to the act of adjusting the book number.

If time can be saved by eliminating shelf listing as a processing step, efficiency should be increased. Also, without local shelf listing, out-sourcing of book processing to a vendor

may become a more viable alternative. According to O'Neill,

> Cuttering is an expensive, time-consuming, and error-prone operation, and has never received as much intellectual attention as classification. For copy cataloging, the cutter number is the only element in the bibliographic record that routinely requires adjustment to ensure that the call number is unique and fits in the local shelflist (O'Neill 1995, 4).

By eliminating shelf listing, the role of the call number functions more as a shelf position indicator and less as a means of keeping like items together. In many libraries the bar code, rather than the call number, is the unique number assigned to each item. With the use of bar codes it may now no longer be necessary to assign a unique call number to each item. The idea of eliminating shelf listing during book processing might have some merit in order to save time and money. This study will try to examine the impact on browsability in an OPAC display if no adjustment is made to the book number to fit the item into the proper sequence.

LITERATURE SURVEY

A search of the published literature did not reveal any research specifically addressing the idea of eliminating the shelf listing of call numbers. However, there are areas of research that are related to this topic that might influence a library administration's thinking about the issue of eliminating shelf listing as a part of book processing. The research can be categorized into three broad areas: 1) classification schemes in an online environment, 2) the quality of bibliographic records in

the online databases of bibliographic utilities, and 3) catalog use studies and/or information seeking behavior studies.

Classification Schemes in an Online Environment

There is much study and research in the literature that discusses the use of classification schemes as a means of improving access to items in an online environment. Most of these reports concern the enhancement of classification schemes through such possibilities as direct link of class number to subject index files (Broadbent 1989, 108; Drabenstott et al. 1990, 179). Broadbent highlights the issues by wondering if an online catalog can function both as a dictionary and classified catalog without requiring additional time or intellectual effort on the part of the cataloger. Drabenstott et al. study the importance of incorporating a classification scheme into the retrieval protocols of an online catalog to introduce a logical approach to subject searching and to increase the amount of subject information contained in subject indexes from the subjects detailed in bibliographic records.

There is also research being done in the area of multiple class number assignment in the bibliographic record. Both Hill and Huestis discuss this as a possible use of classification in an online environment (Huestis 1988, 383; Hill 1984, 21). Huestis describes the development of clusters of classification numbers in an index which is associated with bibliographic records and accessible in the online index searching program.

Past and present classification practices are summarized by Hill who concludes with proposals for action in classification research to provide enhanced subject access through multiple classification numbers.

Both Svenonius and Langridge mention the use of classification as a means of achieving compatibility of retrieval languages by serving as a switching language (Svenonius 1983, 80; Langridge 1992). Langridge defines switching language as a classification not intended for organizing documents but rather as an intermediary through which the subjects of documents can be translated from the terms of one system to those of another (p. 40).

One last area of interest to be mentioned here is the idea of classification schemes being used as independent online retrieval tools. An article by Cochrane and Markey presents research on data elements that have been enumerated for the purpose of constructing files of library classification records to assist in information retrieval (Cochrane and Markey 1985, 108-109). Williamson specifically addresses innovations in thesaurus design and standards see how classificatory structure will support information retrieval (Williamson 1989, 90). Both of these articles reach the conclusion that an online classification index can aid in retrieval although research into its design, users, and expected results, still need to be addressed.

The above research implies that current classification

practices, in and by themselves, are not an effective tool for the retrieval of information or, are not used to the fullest advantage at the present time. In a survey of ARL libraries from 1986, seventy-seven libraries were still maintaining a card shelf list file (Epple and Ginder 1987, 294). The reasons for doing this were a true shelf list function was not available online, parts of the collection needed retrospective conversion, and better browsability functions were needed in online systems. As Chan states,

> Classification holds great promise for augmenting effectiveness in online retrieval. While certain characteristics of classification prevent its being a totally reliable retrieval tool by itself, it can be a useful supplementary device (Chan 1989, 536).

Even though this study is concerned with the non-adjustment of call numbers, it can be viewed as a possible development in the use of classification in online systems. It supplements current research by investigating the sharing of call numbers among many libraries. Using a standard or the same call number among many libraries might make the development of classification schemes and their uses as search tools more acceptable because the results may be applied to many libraries rather than one library at a time.

Quality of Bibliographic Records in Bibliographic Utilities

The second area of research examined for this study concerns the quality of bibliographic records or the accuracy of copy provided by bibliographic utilities. These studies include all

fields in the provided record, of which the call number is but one element. In 1987 at the Mann Library of Cornell University, Janet McCue and others found that in an analysis of cataloging copy found in the RLIN database, 57.4% of a total of 85.3 changes were modifications to the classification number. This total represents a weighted number that shows fractional enhancements when a single decision involved both an enhancement and a nonenhancement change as decided by catalogers and copy catalogers. The authors also state, "The fact that one or more Mann catalogers changed the classification on 39 of 80 records (including 4 LC) illustrates the latitude possible in determining classification" (McCue, Weiss, and Wilson 1991, 73). The authors do not define their use of the term classification, but one gets a sense from the content of the article that the term is applied to the class number portion of the call number. Their point about determining classification is to recommend more in-depth training on choice and form of classification numbers by copy catalogers.

In a study on the accuracy of LC copy, Arlene Taylor and Charles Simpson also included classification as an access point worth consideration in their research. They found that there were 4.3% problems with call numbers in the Cataloging in Publication (CIP) sample and a total of 5.5% problems with call numbers in the non-CIP sample in their study. The items selected for the study were chosen by taking every book that arrived in the cataloging department and separating the items into two

groups: the CIP group was chosen by selecting every book for which CIP copy was available in the OCLC database, and the LC group was selected by taking books that had not been cataloged originally in the CIP program (Taylor and Simpson 1986, 377). The article does not present data on the actual problems found in the classification, but that the problems are considered significant errors because classification is seen as a major access point. Shared cataloging as accepted or applied by local libraries is of great interest to the library community. Although the focus of this current study does not examine the accurate assignment of class number, acceptance of non-adjustment of provided call numbers is related to the overall acceptance of the accuracy of the classification assignment.

There is a lack of research on the call number field alone as an access point as found in bibliographic records provided by bibliographic utilities. There seems to be a general perception that classifying a document or assigning just the class number portion is a very individualized process. Thus, one classifier's subject analysis and classification assignment might be slightly different from another classifier's assignment for the same item. The inconsistencies of classification through subject analysis do point to another possible weakness in the sharing of call numbers without adjustment. This study is concerned with alphabetic sequence yet class assignment might have an impact on a decision to accept a call number without review. Jones, in an investigation of information retrieval from a classification of

words used to group documents together, states,

> By this [a certain sort of classification] I mean a classification in which members of a class do not necessarily all share one or more common properties, and in which individual items can appear in more than one class. ... This is a natural consequence of the fact that the documents in a collection, though they may be topically related, are not likely to be identical in both subject matter and vocabulary (Jones 1970, 91).

She discusses the difficulty in accurately and consistently assigning the correct identifier to similar documents in order to group them together for retrieval. Consistency in the use of any classification scheme seems to be somewhat problematic. Bibliographic classification differences in libraries may also be affected by the needs and expectations of each library.

Current practice assigns one class number to an item based on the first subject heading. If classification is a subjective decision making process, then for a call number found on copy, can we assume that the general class indication of content or topic is acceptable or that, in reality, the call number is used as a shelf position indicator?

Before addressing the last related research area, it should be mentioned that there are surveys administered by bibliographic utilities to assess their users' perceptions about record quality in their databases. In an article about a survey on records in the OCLC database, Davis asks two questions concerning the seriousness of errors encountered in records, and the perceptions of how well existing programs addressed quality control needs (Davis 1989, 44). The research interest in shared records by both user and provider is of importance to this study because

this study investigates the acceptance of a provided field without review.

Catalog Use Studies

The last area examined as related to this study are catalog use studies and/or information seeking behaviors. In these areas there is a wealth of research. The following from R. Hyman's introduction in his Access to Library Collections sums up the issues involved.

> An investigation of any aspect of the direct shelf approach involves one immediately in a central problem which ramifies [i.e., divides], often unexpectedly, into almost every major concern, theoretical and practical, of librarianship. Thus, one may easily become entangled in: selection and acquisition policy ...; the function of cataloging, particularly of subject heading, vis-a-vis classification; general versus special classification schemes; documentation as related to librarianship; the utility of mnemonic and of expressive notation; bibliotecal as against bibliographical classification; the differing interpretations of the browsing concept (and of browsability) for research and for non-scholarly library use; how to determine and store less-used or obsolescent materials; the divergent philosophies on the desirable extent of readers' services and reference assistance; the worth and form of independent study in the library; the suitability of the Library of Congress Classification (LC) or of the Dewey Decimal Classification (DC) for various types and sizes of libraries--an issue often complicated by concomitant problems of reclassification; the encroachments on direct access resulting from increased use of microforms and from possible mechanized information storage and retrieval; the proper educational, social, or scholarly functions of libraries. Nor is this by any means a full listing of the threatening entanglements (Hyman 1972, 2).

Even though this statement was written in 1972, its myriad points seem to hold true today. When studying the very basic organizational structure of the library, or the direct shelf

approach of the organization of the items on the shelves, all of the library's related parts or activities come under scrutiny. Use of card files or online files is usually the initial contact by a patron when beginning to seek an answer to a question or look for a specific item. Making a change in just one of the available files could affect many aspects of how a library is organized and operates.

Catalog use studies investigate not only how the information is organized and retrieved as seen in the basic attitudes and behaviors of patrons as formulated through transaction logs, interviews, and surveys of how they approach information gathering, but also, use studies investigate the schemes used to organize the information in the physical arrangement of the library and in online systems and their retrieval capabilities.

A common conclusion reached in many reports is that patrons, when seeking information, do not use the call number file as their initial search option. Patrons, for the most part, approach the search for information from a known item point of view (author search/title search) or from a subject heading perspective (subject search) (Wallace 1993, 239; Tagliacozzo, Rosenberg, and Kochen 1970, 248; Hancock 1987, 306). After completing the search, patrons use call numbers to locate the item on the shelf. It is reported that once having reached the shelf, patrons will then browse through like items for other appropriate titles. Patron behavior indicates they do not use call numbers for information searching. They use call numbers as

pointers to the physical item, and when they find the shelf area in the library they browse titles, not call numbers.

Although the following by Thomas Mann is not a user study, it does summarize another aspect of patron behavior that influences search strategies. It is identified by Mann as the Principle of Least Effort.

> This principle states that most researchers (even "serious" scholars) will tend to choose easily available information sources, even when they are objectively of low quality, and further, will tend to be satisfied with whatever can be found easily in preference to pursuing higher-quality sources whose use would require a greater expenditure of effort (Mann 1993, 91).

In general, patrons want their information search to be quick, easy, and usable -- not too many items retrieved.

Another common thread in user study reports is reference to the classification scheme itself and how it is manifested in the physical arrangement of the items in the library. The classification of the store of human knowledge is indeed a very complex issue. As stated by Langridge,

> In the bibliographic context, 'classification' is commonly taken to imply 'classification schemes'. These represent the fullest use of classificatory methods, but the term 'classification' by itself really means a way of thinking that pervades all subject work (Langridge 1992, x).

A "way of thinking" is the crux of the issue facing libraries today. Each and every patron may have his or her own way of approaching a search for information. How to find the "typical patron" in order to design the best scheme for organization would seem to be very hard to define. The Library of Congress Classification schedules are very complex and without some

explanation, patrons may not able to use them. The full call number is used by patrons to locate the item on the shelf, and only in its broadest sense (class number only) will 'classification' assist the patron in browsing by linking like items together.

This leads to another interesting point found in many of the user studies. Not all of the items with the same class number will necessarily be shelved together (Mann 1993, 31). Due to format (book, microform, serial), size, change in class or other reason, materials with the same topic may well be housed in many different locations in the library. As Mann relates after helping a patron find the information she needed, "In other words, the physical arrangement of the library itself contributed to her problem by scattering the relevant sources in ways not perceptible to her" (Mann 1993, 6).

All of these broad areas of research, classification schemes, quality of available bibliographic records, and catalog use studies, are important and might be influenced by the outcome of this study. The literature summarized above is almost all from librarians and information specialists doing research in the United States. This is due partly to the classification system used by the library that is the data source for this study. The Library of Congress classification scheme is used primarily in the United States and Canada so most research about its use and applications will come from this part of the world.

Besides the Library of Congress scheme there are four other

major schemes in use around the world today. They are the Dewey Decimal Classification (DC), the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC), the Colon Classification (CC) and the Bibliographic or Bliss Classification (BC) (Marcella and Newton 1994, 72-99). The two most prevalent systems are the Dewey Decimal and the Universal Decimal for overall use in libraries around the world. As stated above the Library of Congress scheme is used mostly in the United States and Canada. All of the schemes are being researched for their application and use, especially in the area of class number expansion to meet the local needs of the libraries that use them. According to Williamson,

> Most major general classification systems have been developed by organizations or editorial policy committees which represent the users of the schemes and are international in scope. Through their administrative structure, these systems have been subjected to rigorous scrutiny throughout the revision process. This is true of both the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) and the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC). A major exception is the Library of Congress Classification (LCC) which, because it is developed to meet LC's own needs, is revised by committees within that institution. Since each classification system is based on a particular philosophy and has many unique features, it is not surprising that common "guidelines" or "standards" for their construction have not emerged. However, DDC and LCC can be regarded as standards and have become so by virtue of their appearance in MARC records which have international distribution. While the latter is not true of UDC, that system can also be regarded as a standard because it is used by many libraries throughout the world (Williamson 1995, 286).

Classification systems are always under revision because notation requirements must be added or changed for ever expanding topics/information and geographical changes.

Classification systems are also studied as information

retrieval tools but most research shows a lack of confidence in their use this way as they exist or are applied today. In a book chapter on classification and the user, Younger states,

> In U.S. libraries the general practice is to assign only one classification number, thus omitting designation of any minor topics treated in the book and reflecting only the perspective of the classification scheme, not necessarily that of the browser. What Robert Fairthorne dubbed as the mark-and-park approach, one employs a single classification number primarily to "mark" the content of the item on the piece and to "park" the item on the shelf in the correct order among other similar items, adds to the limitations of browsing (Younger 1990, 177).

However, is the mark and park practice only a perception in the United States or is it also a practice in the application of other classification schemes?

In a summary on the use of the Dewey Decimal Classification scheme, the most widely used scheme in the world today, Sweeney addresses this issue by stating, "Surveys have shown that almost all libraries are using the Classification as a shelf location device, but some also use it as their main subject retrieval tool in classified catalogues" (Sweeney 1991, 22). Later on in the same article he states,

> The rapidity with which online catalogues are being introduced into libraries and the much greater possibilities of using the Classification as a means of subject retrieval throw the emphasis even further on to the retrieval aspects. If the Classification is to be used this way, then we must expect its development to take account of this factor (Sweeney 1991, 22).

It can be seen that there is much activity, study, and discussion in the area of classification research. Call number as shelf position locator also seems to be a common perception or use in the actual practice of call number assignment no matter

what the classification system in use at a particular library. Classification schemes or call number assignments are revised to meet the continuing changes in information, are examined in records found in bibliographic utilities, and are studied as to their use by those searching for information. This study might raise more questions than it answers, but it is hoped that this research will shed some light on the non-adjustment of call numbers as a possible option for libraries to consider.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The research questions to be examined by this study are: Is it necessary to adjust the book number to maintain alphabetic order of items within a class and, if not, how does this affect the call number display in an OPAC? In other words, to what degree will the browsability of a collection in an online catalog change if call numbers are not shelf listed? The preponderance of literature describes the need for research and development in the use and application of classification systems and the need for more analysis of searching behaviors. No research has been done in the suspension of concatenation with an examination on the impact of browsability in an OPAC if strict alphabetic order is not maintained. Libraries might be able to abandon strict alphabetic order for speedier, more efficient processing of materials if browsability in the call number file is not greatly affected.

The data collected for this study are taken from items copy

cataloged at a large, academic, research library that uses the Library of Congress Classification scheme. Data have been compiled on books that receive copy cataloging using bibliographic records found in the OCLC National Union Catalog. These supplied bibliographic records (whether from the Library of Congress or member institutions) were considered acceptable if they included a Library of Congress Classification number and subject entries. Provided records that did not have a Library of Congress type call number were eliminated from the sample. Because this study is primarily concerned with the effect of shelf listing in the OPAC display of items in the catalog, no attempt has been made to ascertain the correctness of the class assignment, and it was assumed that the class number on the bibliographic record as found in the online utility was valid.

In order to provide a description of the overall sample as found in OCLC, the following data elements were tracked from the supplied copy:

1) cataloging input agency: Library of Congress or member institution,
2) the encoding level: blank (Library of Congress), I (member institution), 8 (CIP cataloging)), and other (e.g., 5 for minimal level cataloging),
3) bibliographic description: blank (non-ISBD), a (AACR2), i (ISBD form), and
4) call number field tag 050 (assigned by the Library of Congress), or 090 (assigned by member institutions

using the Library of Congress Classification scheme).

An analysis of the portions of the call number that were changed is also provided to identify the types of changes made to the call number for shelf listing purposes. The categories used to track the call number changes were:

1) classification (which includes subject or literary author cutters),
2) book number (cutter used to alphabetize into the shelf list),
3) changes required for local practice (adding a date, adding a number one for English translation, etc.), and
4) no change required.

In addition to the above, it was noted whether an unchanged call number matches or duplicates a call number already in the call number file. It was also noted if the changed call number was literature.

In summary, to assess the browsability of like items in the OPAC, three basic steps were used to analyze the sample: 1) a description of the type of copy used in book processing, 2) call number analysis to assess how many call numbers were changed, and, 3) of those changed call numbers, how many would have been one, two, or three or more screens away if not changed. The last step could only be done after step two which eliminates those items in which the call number has not been changed.

The source data for this study have been collected from three months of cataloging production at a large (approximately 5

million volumes), academic, research library. The daily production at this library may be described as approximately 250-300 cataloged items in all formats. Every tenth workform has been selected for the sample. Production folders from September 1 through November 30, 1992, were used in this study as a representative sample of the approximately 12,000 to 15,000 items normally added to this collection every three months.

The sample was selected according to the following conditions made prior to the actual data analysis:

1. Only those items that were copy cataloged were used. Any workforms selected that were "originally cataloged" at the library were removed during the analysis of the overall sample.

2. Only monographs (including microforms) were used as source data.

3. Those items cataloged with a locally constructed call number (not LC classification) were not used as source data and eliminated from the sample during the analysis of the overall sample.

Examples of the data collection sheets and a sample production form can be found in the Appendices.

The source data used in this study were for items processed in the fall of 1992 and therefore are three years old when analysis begins. Approximately 150,000 to 175,000 items have been added to the online catalog since the sample items have been cataloged. By counting lines in the online catalog display for the unchanged call numbers, an estimate on the effect of browsability in the OPAC was based on a time period of three years.

RESULTS

The sample yielded a total of 1,130 titles. The analysis began with a brief description of the type of copy provided and used for book processing. The fields chosen to describe the overall sample were: 1) 040 field or cataloging source (variable field), 2) encoding level (fixed field), 3) description (fixed field), and 4) 050 or 090 call number field tag (variable field). The definitions for these fields were taken from the document Bibliographic Formats and Standards (1993, FF:3-75, O79-83) issued by the OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc. What follows is the summary of the field descriptions of the entire sample.

In all cases the first part, or subfield "a", of the 040 field was used to identify the original source of the cataloging data.

Cataloging Source

040 Field	Number of Titles	Percent of Sample
Library of Congress	753	66.6%
Member Institutions	377	33.4%
Totals	1,130	100.0%

The field examined next was encoding level. Encoding level indicates the degree of completeness of the machine-readable record. The Library of Congress, National Library of Medicine, British Library, National Library of Canada, National Library of

Australia, and the National Series Data Program use blank and numeric codes in this field. Member institutions use capital letter codes. Encoding level "blank" is defined as full-level cataloging; encoding level 8 is the code for prepublication-level cataloging or cataloging done from data sheets supplied by the producer or publisher (Cataloging-in-Publication program (CIP)); encoding level I indicates full-level cataloging input by OCLC participating institutions. The above described codes, levels blank, I, and 8, are specifically examined because they are indicative of full-level cataloging which should include a complete call number.

Other codes used in this field, e.g., levels 5 or M, usually indicate less than full-level cataloging. All other codes found in the provided copy are grouped together into a category titled, "Other." The results are found in the table below:

Encoding Level

Level	Number of Titles	Percent of Sample
Blank	511	45.2%
I	337	29.8%
8	243	21.5%
Other	39	3.4%
Totals	1,130	99.9%*

*Percent less than 100 due to rounding

The description field indicates whether the item has been

cataloged according to the provisions of International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD). The three possible indicators for this field are: "blank", which indicates record is in non-ISBD (International Standard Bibliographic Description) form; "a", which indicates record is in AACR2 form (Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, second edition); and "I", which indicates record is in ISBD form and is known to be a non-AACR2 record. The description codes are concerned with the bibliographic description of the content of the record and do not imply whether the choice and form of the headings used in the record follow AACR2 standards and rules.

Description: Fixed Field

Code	Number of Titles	Percent of Sample
a	1,064	94.2%
Blank	38	3.4%
I	28	2.5%
Totals	1,130	100.1%*

*Percent is more than 100 due to rounding

From the above three data elements (cataloging source, encoding level, and description), it can be ascertained that of the copy used, 66.6% was input by national libraries, and 75.0% (encoding level blank plus I) was full-level cataloging. One-third of the sample or 33.4% was input by member institutions of

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which 29.8% was input at full-level cataloging. Overall, 94.2% of the sample used in this study was input in AACR2 form. Only 3.4% of the sample is in less than full-cataloging, and 5.9% of the records were in earlier forms of bibliographic description. To summarize, 96.5% of the sample (encoding levels blank, I, 8) and 94.2% of the sample (description a) indicated usable, available copy.

Call number assignment field tag is the next element that was examined because acceptable copy is defined by this library as having a Library of Congress classified call number. Besides the 050 and 090 field tags, the fact that neither tag was present in the record was tracked and defined in the table with other tags, e.g., 070, 060, 092, 082 that are not used by this research library for book processing. 050 tag is defined as a call number assigned by the Library of Congress and 090 field tag is defined as a call number based on the Library of Congress Classification schedules but assigned locally. The survey results are:

Call Number Field Tag

Tag	Number of Titles	Percent of Sample
050 or 090	1,065	94.2%
Other or Not Present	65	5.8%
Totals	1,130	100.0%

The sixty-five titles in the other or not present category were eliminated from further analysis. These titles were

eliminated since this type of call number is always shelf listed by the staff in the library and would not fall into a processing category of acceptance without review. With the elimination of the sixty-five titles, the sample size was reduced to 1,065.

Another book processing requirement of this library is that the selected copy must have valid Library of Congress subject headings (650 field tag). This category does not affect the study except that items without valid subject entries would be forwarded to the original cataloging section for subject entry assignment and then be copy cataloged. This category was to note how many items would be removed from a processing "without review" flow of materials.

Subject Entries

650 Field Tag	Number of Titles	Percent of Titles
Present	972	91.3%
Not Present	93	8.7%
Totals	1,065	100.0%

Of the ninety-three titles without subject entries, sixty-seven titles were classed as literature, which do not require subject analysis. Only twenty-six titles had no required (by this library) subject entries. None of these titles were eliminated from the sample at this point because they were processed using the call number found on the copy, although these

all required expert attention before being processed.

The last category used in this study to define the sample answers the question: Is it original cataloging input by this research library? This question is important because it signifies full shelf listing of titles prior to input to the OCLC National Union Catalog and this study examined those items that were copy cataloged. The results are as follows:

Original Cataloging

By Research Library	Titles	Percent of Sample
Yes	45	4.2%
No	1,020	95.7%
Totals	1,065	99.9%*

*Percent is less than 100 due to rounding

From all of the above statistics, the initial sample has been reduced by sixty-five titles that did not have a call number and forty-five titles that were originally cataloged. The total sample is now 1,020.

Of the remaining 1,020 titles only the call number was examined further. The initial examination determined whether the call number on the bibliographic record used in the processing of each title was changed or whether it was accepted as found in the bibliographic record. The results are as follows:

Call Numbers

Call Number Changed?	Titles	Percent of Sample
Yes	224	21.9%
No	796	78.0%
Totals	1,020	99.9%*

*Percent is less than 100 because of rounding

Note that 78.0% of the call numbers found in the bibliographic record chosen for book processing were shelf listed and accepted as a perfect fit into this library's collection. The sample for analysis of screen displays is therefore 224 titles and the remainder of this discussion will address the changes to the call numbers of those titles.

Of the remaining 224 titles, three categories were tracked to identify which part of the call number was changed. First, it was noted if the class number, which includes author, subject or topical cutter, had been changed. This change was counted first and as the only change even if other parts of that call number were changed. Second, the book number, which alphabetizes the title into the collection, was examined. This category was counted as the only change if it was the only element changed in the call number. Third, changes due solely to a local practice were counted as the one and only change provided that the class and book numbers were not changed. There were three local practices included in this study: 1) adding a number one to the

book number to indicate English translation, 2) adding a cutter, Z8, to show literary criticism, and 3) adding a year to the call number. A change to a call number was only counted once, beginning with class number, then book number, and finally a local practice change:

Call Number Changes

What Part of Call Number Was Changed?	Titles	Percent of Sample
Class Number	71	31.7%
Book Number	120	53.6%
Local Practice		
Translation	12	5.4%
Z8	4	1.8%
Year	17	7.6%
Totals	224	100.1%*

*Percent is more than 100 due to rounding

By counting the lines in the OPAC display between the unchanged call number, as found on the copy, and the shelf listed call number, the "browsability," or how close to the changed call number does the unchanged call number appear, can be estimated. The OPAC display of call number used by this library displays eight call numbers on one screen. When a call number is input that does not match an existing call number, the input call number is displayed in the middle of the screen with four call numbers above and below. For this study, the call number lines

are translated into OPAC screen displays as follows:

1) 1-4 lines are equal to the same screen

2) 5-12 lines are equal to one screen away

3) 13-20 lines are equal to two screens away

4) 21-28 lines are equal to three screens away

5) 28+ are equal to more than three screens away

The results of the OPAC search on the unchanged call number in relation to the shelf listed call numbers appear in the following chart:

OPAC Display Results

Number of Screens	Titles	Percent of Sample
Same Screen	136	60.7%
One Screen Away	51	22.8%
Two Screens Away	13	5.8%
Three Screens Away	2	1.0%
Three + Screens Away	22	9.8%
Totals	224	100.1%*

*Percent is more than 100 due to rounding

Note here that 83.5% (same screen plus one screen or within twelve lines) would probably have been found or seen by the patron if they follow the principle of least effort. Another way to say this is that the change to the call number was relatively

slight when position in the OPAC display was examined. This does leave 16.6% of the titles that, if a patron was following the principle, would result in a missed or failed search result.

A characteristic of this library's OPAC is that the call number does not have to be unique when a record is added to the database. The unique number for each item is the barcode. It is technically possible to have two different items with the same call number and still retrieve them for circulation purposes. It is not known whether this would be confusing to patrons when seen in the OPAC display or on the shelf. Thus an additional category was tracked to determine the percentage of duplicated call numbers if a call number was accepted without review. It was also noted whether the titles were different or the same.

When the OPAC search was done on the unchanged call number it was noted whether the call number duplicated an existing call number.

Duplicate Call Numbers

Is It a Duplicate Call Number?	Titles	Percent of Sample
Yes	8	3.6%
No	216	96.4%
Totals	224	100.0%

Of the 224 titles, eight or 3.6% duplicated an existing call number. In six of eight or 75%, the titles were different which

means the same call number was assigned to two different titles. Of the two unchanged call numbers remaining (25%), it can be noted that one of them matched a call number input to this OPAC by another library. The other unchanged call number represented the second edition of a title that matched the call number used for the cataloged, first edition title.

Since approximately 25% of this research library's collection is in the literature classes, two additional categories of information about the changed call numbers were tracked:

1) Whether the item is literature, and
2) Whether the call number change was made to keep literary authors together.

This information helps to explain why there were changes made to the class number portion of the call number (71 changes were made to class number).

Is It Literature?

Literature Class	Number of Titles	Percent of Sample
Yes	55	24.6%
No	169	75.4%
Totals	224	100.0%

Author Cutters

Is Cutter Changed?	Number of Titles	Percent of Sample
Yes	53	23.7%
No	171	76.3%
Totals	224	100.0%

Of the 71 changes made to the class numbers, fifty-five titles or 77.5% were classed in literature. Note that there are two titles for which the actual class number and not the author cutter was changed. If these adjustments had not been made to the call numbers, a "new" class number literary sequence would have been established for these authors. This means that the works of these authors would have been found in two shelf locations. Sixteen titles or 22.5% of the class number changes were not classed in literature. Upon review of these titles, it can be stated that the class number portion was changed because of a topical or geographical cutter. These changes were made to keep the same like topics or geographical areas together in the same shelf location.

Summary of Results

After the compilation of the results of the first search of the OPAC displays in early December 1995, the author intended to do a time series projection based on the results and to check the OPAC displays two more times. However, when the OPAC displays

were examined in February 1996 and May 1996, no change had occurred in the display positions of the 224 titles. This fact alone is significant. Why this is the case can only be surmised. The assumption made is that the size of the collection did not increase enough or that collecting in the subject areas of the 224 titles was not significant enough over eighteen months to make any change in the OPAC display position for the titles. Another consideration would be that, since the fall of 1992, the unchanged call numbers would have compounded the out-of-sequence items. This aspect of the OPAC display results has not been tracked or factored into the results of this investigation.

Since the size of the library collection seems to have an effect on the OPAC displays, some overall projections might be made for one year of production against the size of the database. Of the original sample (1,130 titles), 95.7% or 1,020 titles were able to be processed because acceptable copy was available. Of these 1,020 titles, 224 or 21.9% had a call number change. If these call numbers had not been changed then 224 titles would not be in correct order in the OPAC display. In this study, 187 of the 224 titles or 83.5% that fell on the same screen or one screen away, are considered easily findable if a search of the OPAC is done by call number. The remaining 37 titles or 16.6% would fall two or more screens away and are considered not easily findable. Note that 796 titles or 78% of the 1,020 titles would fit perfectly into the collection without call number adjustment.

Based on the sample results, the following projections can

be made for one year of production. There would be approximately 45,200 monograph titles added to the collection in one year. Of these titles, 43,256 could be processed because there was available, acceptable copy. There would be a possibility of 9,473 (21.9%) call number changes. If these call numbers had not been changed, these titles would then be out of order in the OPAC display. However, of the unchanged call numbers, 83.5% or 7,909 titles would be on the same screen or one screen away from the shelf listed call number. This leaves 16.6% or 1,572 titles with unchanged call numbers that would be two or more screens away.

The first OPAC search was done in December 1995, three years after the sample titles had been processed. The estimated size of the database at that time was 2,865,000 titles. Following the line of reasoning above, after three years of production, there would be 4,716 titles (0.16% of the entire database) out of sequence by more than two screens in the OPAC display. Note that the entire database of titles will includes all formats of cataloging records plus order records and this study only examined processed monographic titles. Using 0.16% as the percentage for out-of-sequence titles against yearly database growth, predictions can be made on the number of titles in the database that would be more than two screens away from a shelf listed call number. The above results do not take into account any compounding that may occur because of the out-of-sequence items. This study has not examined whether compounding is a significant factor in increasing the number of items out-of-

sequence over time.

The literature titles are more of a problem if titles are out-of-sequence. With literature, it is the class number that becomes the key element in accepting call numbers without review. Only a cursory review of literature titles was done in this investigation. There were fifty-five literature titles with changed call numbers or 24.6% of the 224 titles that were searched in the OPAC. Of these fifty-five titles, 93.4% or fifty-three had a change made to the author cutter, which is the element used to keep the works of an author together on the shelf. Without this change, the works of an author would have been in different shelf locations. This investigation did not review the literature titles any further, but it would be interesting to specifically note how far from the established class number an unchanged literature call number would fall, not only in the OPAC, but also on the shelf.

Conclusions

The research question asked in this study is: To what degree will the browsability of a collection in an online catalog change if call numbers are not shelf listed? The results indicate that for this library's collection 0.16% of total titles cataloged without call number review may not be easily found in the OPAC. This is not a very large percentage and non-review of call numbers in book processing might be acceptable in some libraries.

However, there are serious questions raised by this study

that have not been answered and more research is recommended before the adoption of this type of processing. This research was limited to a call number search and the display results of titles in an OPAC. The decision on what would be "findable" was based on the readings about user study retrieval preferences. Patrons do not like to retrieve too many titles for review. Also, patrons prefer a known item approach or subject approach and so it is assumed that all titles might be retrieved by this type of search protocol no matter what the call number assignment.

An important constraint of this research is that the OPAC results were not translated to the actual shelf position in the library. Accepting call numbers without review may have one result in the OPAC display and an entirely different result when the actual shelf position of the item is examined. Just suppose that a patron selects an item from a search of the OPAC; the patron jots down the call number and goes to the shelf to retrieve the item; the item selected is one that had a call number that was not changed and the found item is actually five shelf ranges away from like items in the collection. Would the patron be satisfied with this situation? Would the patron realize that more items exist but are not shelved in close proximity to the selected title? How exactly does screen display position translate to actual shelf position? Another mitigating aspect is how are the items actually shelved in each library? In this OPAC, the call number sequence display is continuous no

matter what the format or material type. If a library shelves formats separately, e.g., monographs in one area and serials in another, a shelf position examination might have very different results.

Another question raised by this study is, by accepting call numbers as found on copy without review, how many classification sequences would actually be established for a given topic? It has been established in the review of available copy that 66.6% of records used were provided by the Library of Congress and 33.4% were provided by member institutions. If a call number input by the Library of Congress for a topic has a cutter of R66 and is accepted without review and the library had already established this topic as R6, the result is that two sequences have been established for one topic. It is assumed that the Library of Congress class assignment will remain consistent. If member institution call numbers are accepted without review for the same topic, yet another cutter might be established for this same topic. A library collection could possibly contain quite a few class sequences for items that are traditionally classed together. This could be problematic, not only in the browsing of the OPAC, but also in the browsing of the shelves.

This leads one to question the extent to which a library's processing/maintenance policy extends to the re-cataloging of items to keep them together. Classification schemes by their very nature are under constant revision to codify new information, research areas, and change established areas. Do

libraries go back and adjust class numbers of items if a change has been made to the scheme? It is assumed that they do not because of limited resources. If they do not re-catalog because of schematic changes, would it be necessary to re-catalog items that are out of order because of processing choices?

The above brief discussion is not conclusive of all the issues associated with this study. However, the study shows that approximately 78% of the copy cataloged items fit into this library's collection without needing any call number adjustment. It showed that 21.9% of processed items required a call number adjustment but that for 83.5% of these titles the call number adjustment was so slight that the unchanged call number was on the same screen or the next screen in the OPAC display. This leaves 16.6% of the items out of sequence by two or more screens.

When taken by themselves the statistics seem to make the proposition of processing items without call number review somewhat attractive. However, when translated to the actual physical arrangement of the organization of the collection it becomes less attractive. It is the belief of this author that size of the library collection does make a difference. A similar study on a small library collection, or a study on one of the other classification schemes would make an interesting comparison. It is hoped that this look at call number assignment and how it might be applied or not applied in processing, provides some new ideas or insights. It was an investigation to see "what might be if" a library decides to make such a change in

processing. It is important that libraries try to understand all the ramifications of changes to processes before implementing them in their library. This study is an attempt to gain understanding of call number order in an OPAC display and how search results are affected if call numbers are not adjusted to fit into the local shelf list sequence.

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APPENDICES

Data Sheet 1

What is the source of the provided copy?

Cataloging Source (040 field):

LC	Yes	No
Member	Yes	No

Encoding Level:

Blank	Yes	No
I	Yes	No
8	Yes	No
Other	Yes	No

Bibliographic Description:

Blank	Yes	No
a	Yes	No
I	Yes	No

Call Number Field Tag:

050	Yes	No
090	Yes	No
Other	Yes	No

Does it have subject entries? Yes No

Is it original cataloging? Yes No

Data Sheet 2

Was the call number changed?

Yes

No

What part of the call number was changed?

Class Number (includes author/topical/geographical cutter)

Yes

No

Book Number

Yes

No

Local Practice

English Translation Yes

No

Z8 Yes

No

Year Yes

No

Data Sheet 3

Where would the call number fall if not changed?

1-4 lines?

5-8 lines?

9-12 lines?

13-16 lines?

17-20 lines?

21-24 lines?

25-28 lines?

More than 28?

1-4 lines=Same screen
5-12=One screen
13-20=Two screens
21-28=Three screens
More than 28=More than three screens

Is it literature?

Yes

No

Does the unchanged call number duplicate an existing call number?

Yes

No

Is the duplicate call number title different?

Yes

No

```
Local Rec: 19  [ No Processing : Label OFF : Export OFF ]
NO HOLDINGS IN OSU - 29 OTHER HOLDINGS
OCLC: 23731775                Rec stat: c
Entered: 19910424             Replaced: 19920707          Used: 19920806
Type: a          Bib lvl: m          Source:             Lang:  eng
Repr:            Enc lvl: 8          Conf pub: 0         Ctry:  cau
Indx: 1          Mod rec:            Govt pub: s         Cont:  b
Desc: a          Int lvl:            Festschr: 0         Illus:
                 F/B:     0          Dat tp:   s         Dates: 1992,

 1   010      91-3972
 2   040      DLC #c DLC #d VVC
 3   020      0520075277 (alk. paper)
 4   043      n-us---
 5   050 00   PS323.5 #b .B38 1992
 6   082 00   811/.509 #2 20
 7   090      #b
 8   049      OSUU
 9   100 1    Beach, Christopher.
10   245 10   ABC of influence : #b Ezra Pound and the remaking of American
   poetic tradition / #c Christopher Beach.
11   260      Berkeley : #b University of California Press, #c c1992.
12   263      9205
13   300      xii, 279 p. ; #c 22 cm.
14   504      Includes bibliographical references and index.
15   650  0   American poetry #y 20th century #x History and criticism.
16   650  0   Influence (Literary, artistic, etc.)
17   600 10   Pound, Ezra, #d 1885-1972 #x Influence.

18   910      =XMAI9340/95+WS62100?
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